

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A biologically pure culture of a ~~L~~lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus Lactobacillus~~Lactobacillus~~ having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea~~having a protection property against adhesion of pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea to intestinal cells and/or having a protection property against invasion of pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea into intestinal cells, which~~ Lactobacillus strain is capable of adhering to the intestinal mucosa of a host organism.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (currently amended): The ~~Lactobacillus~~Lactobacillus strain according to claim 1, which is capable of growing in the presence of up to 0.4 % bile salts.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The ~~Lactobacillus~~Lactobacillus strain according to claim 1, which is selected from the group consisting of ~~Lactobacillus rhamnosus~~Lactobacillus rhamnosus and ~~Lactobacillus paracasei~~Lactobacillus paracasei.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The ~~Lactobacillus~~Lactobacillus strain according to claim 4, which is Lactobacillus paracasei.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The ~~Lactobacillus~~Lactobacillus ~~paracasei~~paracasei according to claim 5, which is ~~Lactobacillus paracasei~~Lactobacillus paracasei CNCM I-2116 (NCC 2461).

Claim 7 (withdrawn): A method for preparing an ingestible support material comprising using a lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 7, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is contained in the ingestible support material in an amount from about 10^5 cfu / g to about 10^{12} cfu / g support material.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): A method for preparing an ingestible support comprising the steps of using a supernatant of a culture of a lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): The method of claim 9, wherein the ingestible support is a food composition selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, and infant formulae.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): A method for the treatment of a disorder associated with diarrhoea comprising the step of administering a lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea.

Claim 12 (withdrawn): A pharmaceutical composition containing at least one lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea or a supernatant of a culture thereof.

Claim 13 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 11 wherein the lactic acid bacterium strain is in a composition which is selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, infant formulae, tablets, liquid bacterial suspensions, dried oral supplement, liquid oral supplement, dry tube feeding and liquid tube feeding.

Claim 14 (withdrawn): The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is capable of adhering to the intestinal mucosa of a host organism.

Claim 15(withdrawn): The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 wherein the Lactobacillus strain is capable to grow in the presence of up to 0.4 % bile salts.

Claim 16 (withdrawn): The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 wherein the Lactobacillus strain is selected from the group consisting of Lactobacillus rhamnosus and Lactobacillus paracasei.

Claim 17 (withdrawn): The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 wherein the Lactobacillus strain is Lactobacillus paracasei.

Claim 18 (withdrawn): The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 wherein the Lactobacillus strain is Lactobacillus paracasei CNCM I-2116 (NCC 2461).

Claim 19 (withdrawn): The method of claim 7 wherein the ingestable support material is a food composition selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, and infant formula.

Claim 20 (withdrawn): A method for preventing a disorder associated with diarrhoea comprising the step of administering to a patient at risk of such disorder a lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A food containing a biologically pure culture of a lactic acid bacterium strain belonging to the genus ~~Lactobacillus~~ Lactobacillus having the capability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The food according to claim 21 wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, infant formulae, tablets, liquid bacterial suspensions, dried oral supplement, liquid oral supplement, dry tube feeding and liquid tubefeeding.